

Saltwater Advisory Council

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Mickey Whittington
Chairman

William "Billy" Bice
Vice-Chairman

January 12, 2006

Honorable Bob Lane
State Representative, District 158
226-A State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30334

Dear Bob,

This letter is a follow-up to our previous conversations regarding a reduction of the creel limit for tripletail. At the September 29, 2005, meeting of the Saltwater Advisory Council (SAC), a motion supporting a reduction in daily creel limit for tripletail from 5 to 2 was passed unanimously. It is the belief of the SAC that reducing the limit now while the fishery is still healthy is a wise thing to do. I strongly concur with this belief and urge you on behalf of myself and the other council members to introduce the legislation needed to make this change.

Little is known about the biology and population cycles of tripletail. The Georgia Department of Natural Resources and the University of Southern Mississippi are striving to learn more through an angler tagging program and the collection of biological data from harvested fish. I am active in this research as are other fishermen in the Brunswick-Golden Isles area. I participate because I believe the information collected will provide valuable knowledge and understanding of this fish. However, until we gain this knowledge, proactive conservation is a prudent course of action.

Georgia's tripletail fishery is growing in popularity and has the potential to have a significant positive impact on the economic health of the coastal area. However, there is potential for overfishing. By further limiting the daily take we will provide more saltwater anglers a chance to enjoy this very unique fishing opportunity. As you know from personal experience, the free-swimming tripletail offers a "sight fishing" experience unlike anything else along the Georgia coast.

Thank you for all you have done and continue to do on behalf of Georgia's citizens. Your leadership in natural resource conservation is deeply and sincerely appreciated. As you know so well, the actions taken now will have a lasting affect for generations to come. If you have any questions please contact me.

Sincerely,



Billy Bice, Vice-Chairman
Saltwater Advisory Council

cc: House Game, Fish, and Parks Committee
Rep. Jerry Keen
Sen. Jeff Chapman
Commissioner Noel Holcomb
Saltwater Advisory Council
Susan Shipman
Spud Woodward